

**FY 2000 Subsistence Fisheries Project Narrative
Project #40**

Project Title: Copper River Subsistence Salmon Fishery Evaluation 2000

Investigator Organizations: ADF&G Division of Subsistence, Copper River Native Association, the Mt. Sanford Consortium and the Village of Chistochina, and local hires

Geographic Area: Cook Inlet/Gulf of Alaska

Information type: Traditional Ecological Knowledge, Harvest Monitoring

Issue Addressed:

1. Long term changes in the ecology of Copper River salmon through the documentation of traditional ecological knowledge.
2. Potential changes in the salmon fishery in light of new state regulatory classifications.
3. Current trends and characteristics of the subsistence fish wheel fishery.

Study Objectives:

1. Record the traditional knowledge of Ahtna elders and other residents of the region as related to the ecology of Copper River salmon.
2. Using quantitative and qualitative methods assess the potential effects of the regulatory reclassification by the Alaska State Board of Fisheries of the personal use dip net fishery to a subsistence fishery.
3. Using similar methods assess the current trends and characteristics of the subsistence fishwheel fishery by describing and analyzing the relationship between fish wheel owners, fish wheel users, and the number of permits issued; and documenting current harvest levels, local observations of abundance, location of effort, and issues of displacement.

Project Description: Information from Ahtna residents of the upper Copper River indicate a number of changes in the ecology of the river and salmon stocks. For instance, local people have indicated that salmon can no longer be found in certain small tributaries of the river. Using interviews with Ahtna elders, conducted by local people, this project will assess long-term changes in the disposition of salmon stocks in the Copper River. This project will also identify current changes in the fishery by documenting local observations of abundance, effort and issues of displacement and comparing those observations to quantitative measures of participation and harvests. Fishery performance in the subsistence fishwheel fishery will be evaluated using two case studies of specific fishing areas: the Chitina Airport and Copperville. Interview topics will focus on issues of crowding, and the migration of dipnet fishers into the upriver subsistence fishery.

Consultation Completed/Potential for Capacity Building: Staff from the Division of Subsistence has initiated contact with staff from the Copper River Native Association, the Mt. Sanford Consortium and the Village of Chistochina. Each of these organizations has received a project summary. Within the near future members of all organizations will meet to discuss the project. Subsistence Division staff also met and discussed the project with the National Park Service and U.S. Forest Service.

Deliverables/Products: In collaboration with tribal entities involved in the project, Subsistence Division staff will prepare a written report that will include a discussion, analysis, and summaries of both the qualitative and quantitative data collected during the research phase.

Costs:

Annual Budget Summary	Native Groups	State Agency	State Local Hire	Total
FY 2000	\$40.0 K	\$53.0 K	\$15.0 K	\$108.0 K